

NeoCon[®]

IS THE OFFICE PERGOLA THE NEW CUBICLE? THE FUTURE OF WORK IS AT NEOCON 2021 October 4-6 at theMART Chicago

(Chicago, IL - August 2021) This fall, the commercial interiors industry will convene to present and discuss the latest solutions and strategies for the workplace at NeoCon, October 4-6, North America's most important gathering of commercial interior design experts. Leading into the show, industry leaders are putting the finishing touches on the new product innovations that will impact the offices and other shared spaces of the future. Whether it's tents and pergolas especially designed for both individual and collaborative work, products for a neurodiverse workforce, flooring that incorporates biophilic patterns, or dynamic furniture systems ideal for flexibility, manufacturers at NeoCon will showcase solutions that contribute to the inclusive, efficient, and user-focused workplaces critical to the well-being of and retention of today's workforce.

"For more than 50 years, NeoCon has helped launch product solutions that meet, and even anticipate, needs and trends in the workplace and other shared spaces. NeoCon 2021 is no different — architects, designers, and facility managers in attendance will get a first look at thousands of product launches from the best manufacturers in the industry," remarks, Byron Morton, Vice President of NeoCon.

Here are some top workplace trends and products to be featured at NeoCon 2021:

Accounting for Mental Health and Neurodiversity

Employee wellness has been a major consideration in office design for many years, but mental wellbeing is coming into greater focus. According to a recent study, 74% of all workers, including 88% of those ages 18-24, say poor mental health has impacted their productivity (Aetna International's 2020 Employee Health Study). In addition to reducing anxiety, which is at an all time high due to the pandemic, research indicates the need for workplaces and solutions that accommodate a neurodiverse workforce. Kay Sargent, a NeoCon 2021 presenter and Director of WorkPlace for global design and architecture firm HOK, remarks, "Approximately 15 to 20 percent of people are 'neurodivergent,' meaning they have one of a collection of conditions that include autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and dyslexia. Versatile environments that provide for a range of options give users more control and choice, fostering equality, integration, and helping to reduce anxiety. Flexible layouts and work solutions individuals can self-select for different kinds of work also contribute to a healthier, more functional and inclusive workplace." **Haworth's** Pergola, designed by Patricia Urquiola, is a novel environment employees can opt to use when a "change of scene" is needed for creative tasks, whether individual or team based. The **Framery** 2Q Huddle contributes to a more flexible office, offering employees another multifunctional space that includes a table to accommodate

up to six people. Its superior sound insulation system and designated display screen guarantees internal meetings and video conferences won't disturb others. **The HON Company's** Workwall transforms any workspace into a personalized "command central" allowing employees more control over the way they work.

Privacy for Individual Work and Personal Space

Privacy solutions are not only ideal for heads-down, focused work, they can also offer users a sense of security. With its light and airy organic shape, **Steelcase's** Work Tent—whether outfitted with a desk and chair or lounge seating—is a stylish and safe personal haven within an open floor plan. **Pedrali's** functional and efficient Buddyhub seat, designed by Busetti Garuti Redaelli, offers employees an isolated alcove that encourages concentration and ensures acoustic and visual privacy. When a quiet spot for meetings with remote workers is needed, **Mute's** Space S pod with video conference capability is a great option and features a state-of-the-art ventilation system to ensure proper air flow. In open spaces, where multiple desks and workplace elements need to co-exist, **3Form's** Varia Desk Partitions can establish physical separation for social distancing, and with the option to configure in a number of different ways, create a variety of more intimate areas for personal space and work.

Space Utilization and Mobility

Offering a myriad of options and areas for different kinds of work requires space utilization efficiency and mobility. **Artome's** M10 portable plug-and-play smart solution for presenting, learning, and videoconferencing, delivers movable and adaptable audiovisual technology whenever and wherever it is needed. Space is maximized with **KI's** Tattoo collection, a modular system of screens, storage, seating, and tables that fit spatially and aesthetically within the same footprint, no matter how they are arranged or rearranged. The stations can be adjusted easily to each user, which is ideal for "hot desking." Lightweight, comfortable, and carefully scaled, **Keilhauer's** carbon neutral Swurve chair can easily be moved and rearranged to create an area that respects physical distance while encouraging collaboration. Likewise, **OM Seating's** Ginny Multi-Tasker is ideal for a wide range of work areas and work styles, performing optimally in both small workspace alcoves and larger collaborative areas.

Elevating the Office Environment

Employee expectations have changed, and workplaces need to not only be safe, socially distant and clean, but also comfortable and aesthetically pleasing. **Andreu World's** Giro Soft by Alfredo Häberli adds style and sophistication and provides an ideal perch for taking a break in between conference calls or long periods at a desk. Not only does the noho move chair have a comfortable and supportive feel, it's also made with ECONYL regenerated nylon manufactured by **Aquafil**—allowing users to feel good about their design choice, too. Its ergonomic design eliminates pressure points and improves the body's circulation. Flooring brands have innovated collections to stylishly ground any office space, both literally and figuratively. **Mohawk Group** connects workers to the peaceful, natural world through its Data Tide collection, which was created using data sets from environmental studies of greenhouse gases to create biophilic patterns that weave a distinct, visual narrative about the immense role bodies of water play in

our world. **Armstrong Flooring's** Exchange invigorates and inspires employees with soft pastels and rich, saturated tones and a visual texture that adds depth and interest under foot.

The Outdoor Advantage

The movement of the office outdoors is nothing new, but there is no doubt that the pandemic has accelerated and popularized the trend. Taking advantage of the external environment also allows for greater available use of real estate, such as utilizing the square footage between buildings on office campuses. Once thought of mainly for al fresco social gatherings, employees are increasingly seeking outdoor spaces as havens for focused, individual work, as well as collaboration. **Division Twelve's** durable metal and fully recyclable HDPE seating is engineered with outdoors in mind. Featuring all-weather powder coats, and heavy-duty glides, it can take on the elements. Similarly, **Allermuir's** CROP collection is fully weatherproof and is available with removable seating pads for added comfort. Everyone has a seat at the table thanks to **JANUS et Cie's** Rally seating and table collection which is ideal for outdoor environments and is ADA compliant. **Fermob's** Abélio provides unobtrusive, stylish separation within an open plan, open air office. Its transparent plexiglass panel boasts an asymmetrical shape, symbolizing a tree that brings a decorative touch to any space.

"Collaboration between architecture, interior design and furniture design is the catalyst in the evolution of space. Of the three, furniture is the most tangible to the occupant, so it has an immense power and impact on the overall environment and end-use. Manufacturers understand this critical role and you will see that firsthand in their showrooms and booths at NeoCon," adds Deirdre Jimenez, President/CEO of BIFMA, the Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association.

NeoCon is open to trade, media, C-Suite executives and other industry-related professionals at www.neocon.com/register. Credentialed members of the media can register for press passes [here](#). Interviews with NeoCon leadership, exhibitors, and speakers are available. To set up an interview, or for more information please email alexandra@novitapr.com. To access a full gallery of images of products mentioned click [here](#). The show will take place October 4-6 from 8am-5pm CDT with media previews available on October 3. Additional details for attending NeoCon can be found at www.neocon.com.

For showroom, exhibitor, and general NeoCon news, images, and real-time information, follow NeoCon Shows on the following: [Facebook \(@NeoConShows\)](#), [Twitter \(@NeoCon Shows\)](#), and [Instagram \(@NeoCon Shows\)](#).

Media Contacts: Novità Communications

Alexandra Zwicky / Danielle McWilliams / Nicole Haddad / Emma Reuland

alexandra@novitapr.com / danielle@novitapr.com / nic@novitapr.com / emma@novitapr.com

###

About NeoCon: NeoCon is the world's leading platform and most important event for the commercial interiors industry, held each year at theMART in Chicago. Since launching in 1969, NeoCon has served as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world's manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, end-users, design organizations and media. The three-day event showcases game-changing products and services from close to 500 leading and emerging companies—providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions. A robust educational program of keynote presentations and CEU sessions offers world-class expertise and insight about today's most relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design. www.neocon.com

NeoCon® is a registered trademark of Merchandise Mart Properties Inc, a subsidiary of Vornado Realty Trust.

About theMART: theMART (formerly The Merchandise Mart), located in the center of the sought-after River North submarket, is interwoven into the fabric of Chicago as an innovator in business, technology, culture, art, media and more. As the largest privately held commercial building in the United States, it is one of the world's leading commercial buildings, wholesale design centers and the preeminent international business location in Chicago. Encompassing 4.2 million gross square feet, theMART spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day and nearly 10 million people annually. Offering continuous innovation and creativity from leading manufacturers and design forward showrooms, theMART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies.